



**PUBLIC WORKS AND
UTILITIES DEPARTMENT**
Watershed Management

Memorandum

Date: 3/10/2005

To: Steve Henrichsen

From: Devin Biesecker

Subject: 2005 Comprehensive Plan Annual Review

cc: Nicole Fleck-Tooze, Ben Higgins

Below are Watershed Management's comments for the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Annual Review.

Comp Plan Amendment #05008 (area near W Coddington and SW 12th St.)

Watershed Management works closely with the Lincoln/Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan to assess where and when new development will occur in order to complete watershed master plans prior to new development in each basin. The goal of a watershed master plan is to identify improvements that will address stream stability, water quality, and flooding problems in each basin. Completing watershed master plans prior to development allows the City to protect new development from existing and future stream stability and flooding issues and reduces the cost of stream stabilization projects which typically become much more expensive in urban areas.

Watershed Management is in the process of completing two watershed master plans on Stevens Creek and Cardwell Branch. These areas were chosen based on where new development was likely to occur. The area of this proposed amendment is Haines Branch watershed and as of now Watershed Management does not have immediate plans to complete a master plan for this basin. It is the goal of the Watershed Management Division to complete master plans of all major drainage basins near the City. Leaving this area designated priority B may allow the Watershed Management division to complete a watershed master plan prior to new development in the Haines Branch Watershed.

Comp Plan Amendment #05010 (84th & Havelock)

This proposal indicates a land use change “from Agricultural to Commercial” for the Lancaster County Event Center. However, the current land use designation is ‘Public/Semi-Public’ in the area outside the floodplain and ‘Green Space’ within the floodplain. In addition, public hearing is scheduled next week before the City Council and County Board on a proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment which refines the boundary of the Green Space designation to match the updated floodplain information developed through the Stevens Creek Watershed Master Plan. An important management strategy embodied in the Comp Plan is to designate areas for future development outside of the floodplain to avoid introducing new development to flood risks and to preserve the important functions of the floodplain. The Green Space designation is intended to identify areas to be used predominantly for active recreation.

The first floodplain permit issued for the Lancaster County Event Center in 1999 showed little or no grading in the northwest corner of the property adjacent to 84th and Havelock Streets and was thus generally consistent with the Land Use Plan in this area. In 2003, a floodplain permit to fill the area west of the north-south driveway was applied for and approved prior to an overall development plan for the site. As we have recommended with previous land use proposals for the event center, the staff continues to recommend the need to evaluate these proposals in the context of a master plan for the Event Center that demonstrates No Net Rise/Compensatory Storage strategies and how other floodplain areas will be preserved if a small portion is developed, in order to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. This information has not been submitted and the staff continues to recommend it, contrary to the application which suggests that a ‘no rise’ evaluation is no longer necessary.

The Stevens Creek floodprone area mapped during development of the Stevens Creek Watershed Master Plan is currently in an initial review stage by FEMA. In December 2004, the City of Lincoln adopted this floodprone area as the best available information for local regulatory purposes. The Event Center has requested that this floodprone area be revised to reflect the fill permitted with the 2003 floodplain permit, however no as-built information has been received. The Event Center has been informed that appropriate as-built information received by April 15, 2005 can be incorporated into the FEMA map update. Future revisions to the locally-adopted floodprone area may be appropriate depending on additional information received.